

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 were pending, with claims 10-13, 16, 17 and 20-27 having been withdrawn by the Patent Office from examination. The Office Action indicates that claims 9, 15 and 19 have been allowed. By this Amendment, claims 7, 10-14, 16-18 and 20-27 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, claim 1 has been amended to include the features formerly recited in now-canceled claim 7, claim 8 has been amended by rewriting it in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and new claims 28-32 which depend from claim 8 have been added. Claims 1-6, 8, 9, 15, 19 and 28-32 would be pending upon entry of this Amendment, with claims 1, 8, 9, 15 and 19 being in independent form.

Claims 1-4, 14 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as purportedly anticipated by Hitoshi (JP 2001-252263). Claims 1, 6, 14 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as purportedly anticipated by Prince et al. (US 7,545,967). Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 14 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as purportedly anticipated by Yasuto et al. (JP 11-137552).

The Office Action also indicated that claims 7 and 8 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to include the features formerly recited in now-canceled claim 7, and claim 8 has been amended by rewriting it in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 8, and the claims depending therefrom, are now allowable.

Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any required fees in connection with this amendment, and to credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

Respectfully submitted,



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